Leading Unpopular Changes With Fair Proces: Towards a Strategic Process Design

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Abstract

As a consultant, I consult and train first and second line managers who's greatest challenge is demands from the top management that their departments should produce more, perhaps even at a better quality than before, without using more resources while realizing the organizational strategy. This often turns out to be perceived as very difficult and unpopular change processes by employees and first and second line managers.

Based on research on procedural justice and strategy implementation (Kim and Mauborgne, 1996, 1997) and constructionist communication theories (Pearce, 2007, 2011; Tomm, 1989; Harré and Davies 1990; Bateson 1972) I develop and present a conceptual framework named fair process with three practical and four theoretical principles for leading these unpopular changes. I then demonstrate fair process in practice with a case from hospital ward. Finally, I present a strategic process design (Pearce, 2011) for creating and managing change processes that aims at involving the employees in developing, testing and implementing solutions to strategic challenges while creating an innovative culture where employees are more prone see solutions to organizational challenges and acting them out in collaboration with management. The conceptual framework and strategic process design is aligned with the findings of Kim and Mauborgne (1997, 1998).

The Challenge

As a consultant, I often work with first and second line department managers who's greatest challenge is demands from the top management that their departments should produce more, perhaps even at a better quality than before, without using more resources. And this is presumably not just a passing phenomenon. In the short as well as the long term, there is a need for managers in public organizations and private businesses to acquire competences in managing the incremental innovation that realizes the organization's strategy while addressing the important challenge to producing more, at a better quality without using more resources.

Incremental innovation

Incremental innovation means small innovations that produce value in the business. (Darsø, 2003) Value can either be economic or related to the quality of the core service. We talk of innovation when the innovation is in use and is of a quality/possesses a feature that enables it to create value. Value can be created economically through a small change of e.g. products, technologies[1], the business model, sales techniques or new forms of collaboration across departments within the business that increase efficiency or income. Value can also be linked to the quality of the core service such as improved customer service and higher customer satisfaction via small improvements in the way frontline workers interact with the costumer, increased clinical value through new approaches in treatments, increased coherence in patient care through new forms of collaboration across the organization, faster and better case handling via new working procedures and work flows. A characteristic of incremental innovation is that the new feature or way of doing things comes at a

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[1] Technologies in the sense of both *technical technologies*, e.g. small innovations in existing technical technologies or the use of technical technologies in other contexts to which the technology may need adaptation (e.g. the use of smartphones for video communication between citizens and home care workers), and as *social technologies*, e.g. small innovations in forms of collaboration, working procedures and procedures related to the production of the core service/product.

relatively low cost, has a low risk and a short time of development (Darsø 2003) and can be implemented quickly to create value.

The local management – usually a handful of heads of department and their immediate superior – must initialize a process that can realize the demands of the top management. How can the management involve staff in quickly developing, testing and implementing small, innovative solutions to important challenges? And how can this be done in a way to make the process contribute to the creation or strengthening of an innovative business culture, a culture in which management and staff become good at collaborating on the creation of small innovations that solve important organizational challenges?

Procedural Justice

Research into psychology of justice and decision-making processes suggests that there is inspiration to be found in the concept of procedural justice (Thibaut and Walker, 1975; Lind and Tyler, 1988). Procedural justice – which was originally conceptualized in a legal context – should be seen as a contrast to distributive justice, which deals with whether members of an organization consider results as fair. When it is impossible to reach an *a priori* consensus on a fair result (such as what work procedures and the division of labor should look like after a vacancy is not replaced) or undesirable for employee motivation and the quality of the solution that executives "put their foot down" and make a detailed top-down decision (how we can create better connections between our sales strategy, production, customer service and logistics), then the concept of procedural justice could be the way to go. Quite often, it is in fact equally important to the members of an organization that the process that produces solutions and results is a fair one. There is also a tendency that people experience results of a process as distributively fair when they see that the process that produces the

result is fair (Lind and Tyler, 1988). So what does it take to create a fair process that responds to an organization's challenges?

Research into the process from formulating a strategy to its implementation shows that when employees are involved in working out suggestions for solutions and know their manager's considerations behind decisions and his expectations to his staff, the employees' attitude and behaviors are affected (Kim and Mauborgne, 1997, 1998). This increases trust in the management and the quality of their decisions. The employees will be more prone to sharing their valuable knowledge about how things could be done more efficiently and will take an active part in implementing the solutions that the management has approved. Conversely, research shows that if any of the three principles: engagement, explanation and clarity of management expectations to the employee, is violated, a negative dynamic arises. This means that employees will distrust the management's intentions and the quality of its decisions. They will tend to retain important knowledge and be reluctant to implementing the solutions approved by the management (Kim and Mauborgne 1997, 1998). The dynamics between process principles, attitudes and behaviors are illustrated in the model below. The process principles will be further described in the following section.

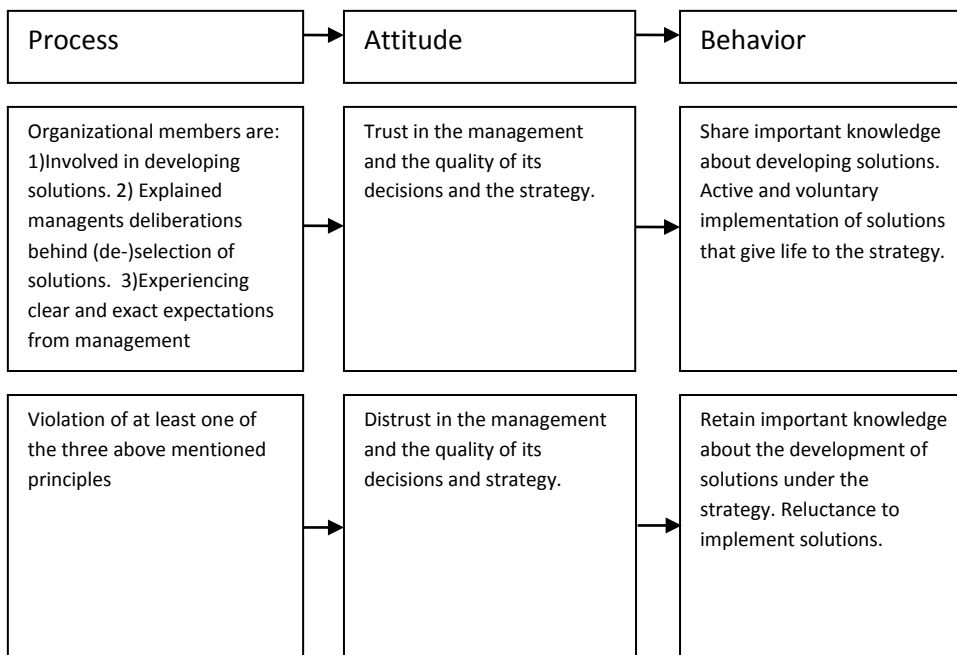| Process	Attitude	Behavior
Organizational members are: 1)Involved in developing solutions. 2) Explained managents deliberations behind (de-)selection of solutions. 3)Experiencing clear and exact expectations from management	Trust in the management and the quality of its decisions and the strategy.	Share important knowledge about developing solutions. Active and voluntary implementation of solutions that give life to the strategy.
Violation of at least one of the three above mentioned principles	Distrust in the management and the quality of its decisions and strategy.	Retain important knowledge about the development of solutions under the strategy. Reluctance to implement solutions.

Figure 1: connection between the process, attitude and behavior (inspired by Kim and Mauborgne, 1997, 1998, 2005).

Fair process

Taking a starting point in the research into procedural justice, I have crafted a social constructionist, theoretical conceptual framework for management of the process level of changes. Since 2007, this conceptual framework has guided my consultancy and project management work in incremental innovation and implementation of strategies in public and private companies. First, I will introduce three applied, practical principles for a fair process: engage, explain and clarify expectations. After that, I will describe five theoretical concepts: context, positioning, agency, transparency and recognition that together with the three applied principles form a theoretical base and practical

guide for the manager's specific work at the process level of changes. I will argue that the manager, through his or her work at the process level, will be able to invite others into positions that predispose attitudes and actions that are particularly desirable for the development and implementation of solutions to important challenges. Below, I will present the conceptual framework for fair process in the shape of a house that is characterized by the fact that the elements both have individual functions while supporting the functions of the others thereby creating a whole which would otherwise be impossible.
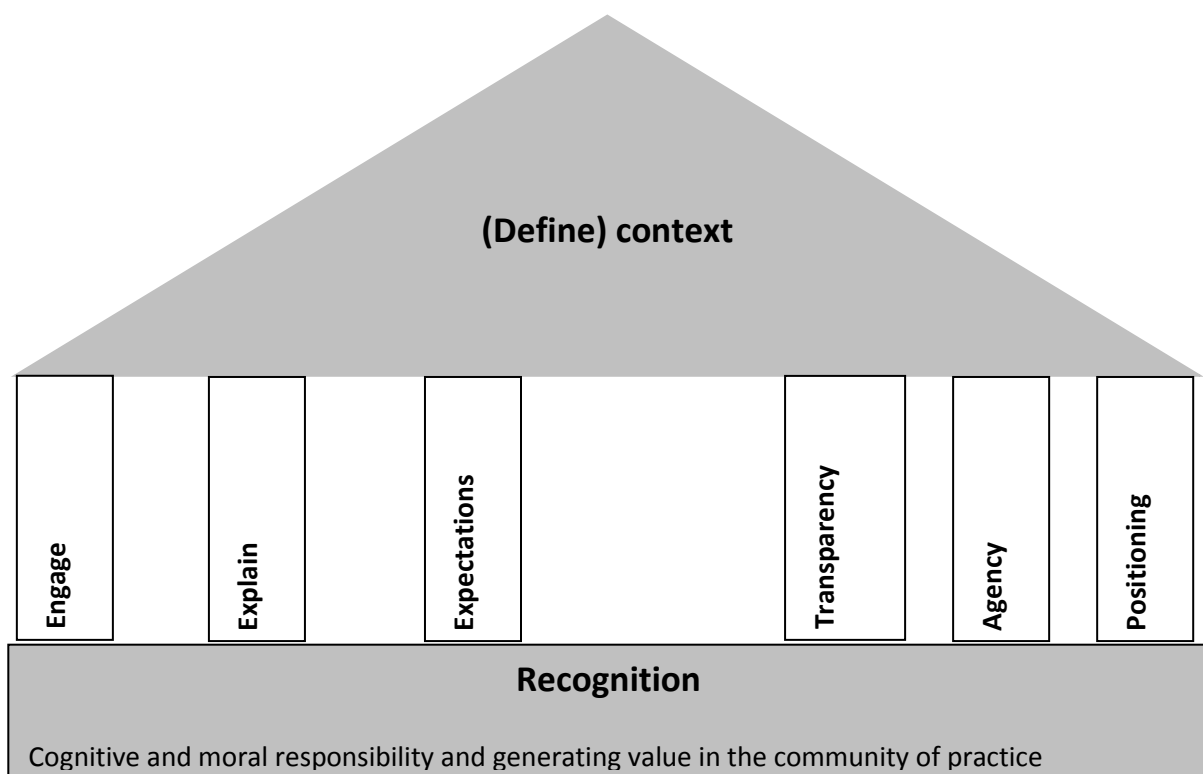

Figure 2: The theoretical house of fair process

Three applied principles

Engage

Engage the members of the organization in the development and testing of solutions that have an influence on their own work. This applies to working out the solutions as well as implementing them. When employees are engaged, it is vital for the quality of the process as well as the solutions that the manager has clearly defined the context in the shape of goals and the framework for the solution of the task. During the process, it is important to encourage people to offer their input and explore the ideas and assumptions of others to create dialogic communication[2] (Pearce, 2007; Losada, 2004).

The purpose of engaging employees is to create agency (the ability to see possibilities and act on them) to enable employees to transform their valuable knowledge into development and testing of solutions on important challenges. The purpose of involving them in development and testing of ideas is that only the best ideas will make it. This increases the quality of the solutions in relation to the strategy, the ownership of the solutions and the speed of implementation that allows the solutions to come into effect.

Explain

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[2] Barnett Pearce (2007: 196) writes that dialogic communication is about participants in a conversation listening to each other, asking questions to the other person's perspective, trying to understand other people's points of view and explain their own, and find ways to move ahead together. Thus, dialogic communication is about the ability to explain one's own point of view as well as exploring the other person's point of view. Losada (2004) demonstrates a clear connection between dialogic communication structures and the business performance of manager teams.

Explain means impart knowledge of the creation process and the rationale behind decisions and the criteria for why the input/ideas of individuals were selected or deselected in the final decision. Explaining something shows that the manager has spent time reflecting on employee ideas in relation to the organization's challenges. This creates clarity in the decision-making process and increases the possibility for employees to trust the manager's decisions even if their own ideas were dismissed. At the same time, this clarifies the context and the specific criteria for the manager's selection/deselection, which enables employees to produce future suggestions for solutions that fit into the context that the manager communicates via his explanation. Or it enables them to deliberately challenge the context with well-reasoned arguments.

Clarify expectations

It is important that the people involved will, at all times, have a clear understanding of what is expected of them i.e. before, during and after decisions are made (e.g. that the manager expects everyone to do their best to make the selected solutions work in practice including making suggestions for improvements). Setting clear expectations is up to the management. Goals (what should be possible later that is not possible at present) and a framework for future task solution are important too (e.g. what is/is not up for discussion and what is up for discussion/can be changed). Clear and specific expectations also enable managers to create dialogues that focus on solutions and to select solutions for testing and implementation.

All three principles - engage, explain, clarify expectations - must be in play for the people involved to perceive the process as "fair". If any one of these is missing, the process is perceived as being unfair and a negative dynamic arises (cf. figure 1 introduced previously).

Five theoretical concepts

Context

Every action or speech should be understood within its context – the situation it exists in.

Especially Gregory Bateson is a source of theoretical inspiration. Words, sentences and actions do

not have fixed meanings in themselves but are interpreted within a given context[3] (Bateson 1972),

i.e. "in what connection should what I am saying be understood".

A core competence for a manager in a systemic practice is to "define the context" and "read the

context". Defining the context means that the context is made clear to the employees to decrease the

degree of misunderstanding and set the direction and framework for actions. In a meeting, it is up to

the manager to define the context for the relations (e.g. what are our expectations to each other how

should I act to be a good meeting chairperson / meeting participant) and for the matter that is the

subject of the meeting (Why are we here?, What do we want to get out of this meeting? What is up

for discussion and what is not? What is the purpose? What should be possible later that is not

possible now? What situation do we need to move away from? What situation would we like to

move towards? How does this align with the other strategies for the organization?).

At the initial phase of a development process, the management could advantageously define the

context for the entire process and its background, purpose, framework and direction. In this phase,

the management will also present the strategic process design for the change process to make the

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[3] Bateson (1972) defines context as: "Any connection that a message, incident or conversation takes place in and which thus classifies/categorises the conversation/message".

course of the process and the management's expectations to employees and itself transparent (more about strategic process design in the next section). In defining the contexts for a development process, it will usually be convenient for the management to be able to answer the questions I have listed below:

- What is the situation?

- What is going to take place?

- What is the purpose?

- What effect should be created for whom and when?

- How does this align with the organization's other strategies?

- What is the framework — what is not negotiable, what do we need to discuss, try out and know more about?

- What situation do we want/need to move away from? Where do we want to go?

- What should be possible afterwards that is not possible now?

- What (strategic) process design will get us there? What are my expectations to my employees in this connection?

- What is the time frame?

- What are the success criteria? (E.g. collaborating on developing, testing and implementing small, innovative solutions that add value to the organization. According to which criteria does the organization assess "value"?

Reading the context is to listen to other people's statements from these perspectives: What is the meaningful context for the other person's statement or behavior? What is the other person's perception of the situation / the case, and how did he or she come to that perception?

Positioning

The concept of positioning, which originates in discourse theory, differs from the concept of role by focusing more on the dynamics of conversations. In any speech act, I will position myself while trying to position the other person (Harré, 1999). When a manager says "I think this plan of action is a good suggestion for the next year's work" it could be an attempt to position him or herself as A) an authoritative manager or B) an engaging manager. Positioning oneself is called first order positioning. The manager's speech act is also a position call which invites the employee into a position as e.g. A) a subordinate who is expected to approve the manager's statements without objection and carry out the plan of action or B) an employee who is expected to contribute thoughts and ideas concerning the quality of the plan of action.[4] The employee may then choose to accept the position call and take up the position or reject it. If he or she rejects it, this is referred to as second order positioning. If the intention of the manager's speech act is to position him or herself as an authoritative manager and the employee rejects the invitation, we talk of second order positioning when the employee through the speech act "I think this plan has defects" positions him or herself as

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[4]The "sender's" positioning of him or herself and the position call are in principle hidden from the "receiver". The receiver must turn to his own understanding of the context to interpret the position call (and the attached obligations to act: "What am I expected to do").

someone who's opinion is worth listening to and attempts to position the manager as someone who wants to listen to it.

The concept of positioning becomes central in fair process because accepting a position means also accepting obligations to act (Harré and Davies, 1990) that have already been articulated as part of the position. In fair process, the employee is positioned as someone who can develop solutions and wants to test them on the important challenges.

Agency

Agency is a concept from discourse theory and a central concept in narrative theory and practice (Tomm, 1989). Experiencing agency means being able to see possibilities and act into them. In fair process, the challenge is to position employees through speech and acts in a way that invites them to take an agency position. For employees to engage in the management's projects, they must be invited into positions that predispose them to see possibilities and act on them. Thus it becomes vital that the management, through its organization of the process, increases agency through facilitation and sets clear expectations to the employees to engage in development and testing of solutions. This is where the solution-focused approach may be useful (for an introduction to the solution-focused approach cf. Langslet 2006, Dahl and Granhof Juhl 2009). The solution-focused approach has a very specific focus on what we wish to achieve, the practical experience of the participants and small, action-oriented steps forward. Experiencing agency – i.e. the ability to do something good about a situation – promotes the employees' relation of recognition towards themselves as well as towards their managers (cf. the section on recognition).

Transparency

In fair process, explanations are important: Why did the manager's decision turn out the way it did? What is the use of it? What considerations lie behind it? And what were the considerations behind deselecting specific ideas? To create employee understanding of the decision and to establish their trust in the management, it is important for employees that they can see what is going on.

But what can the manager do when things are complicated, the situation is momentarily confused and there are no good explanations and answers readily available? This is where the manager could make his considerations about the situation available to the employees: being "transparent about" one's knowledge, reflections and intentions may increase employee trust in the management and the process. Thus, transparency covers more and other things than just the concept of "explanation". From the point made in autopoiese (Maturana, 1998) that the receiver decides what the message is, it follows that the employees define whether the process is sufficiently transparent for them to trust the management.

Recognition

Axel Honneth (2006) argues that in a person's efforts to live a good (working) life, a basic need –

and aspiration is being regarded as cognitively and morally responsible and as someone who's

actions generate value in the community of practice (Honneth 2006: 155-174).[5]

In fair process, recognition is understood as a considerable motivational factor that contributes to

the dynamics in fair process. If several members of the organization see the process as unfair, a

negative dynamic arises (cf. figure 1); is the process seen as fair, a constructive dynamic for

development and testing of solutions is created. Whether the process itself is seen as fair or unfair

is linked to whether a person, during the process, is positioned as an organizational member who is

considered responsible and value-generating — or the opposite — by others in the community of

practice. This goes for the people in the management as well as the employees.

When the management engages the employees in the process (of developing and testing solutions)

each employee is offered a position that creates identity. The employee is positioned as someone

who is recognized as responsible and value-generating in the current organizational context framed

by the management. The desire to be recognized as responsible and value-generating is a motivation

so fundamental that the employee will have a tendency to accept the management's invitation to

engage wholeheartedly in developing and testing solutions (cf. Honneth's point about the need for

recognition). At the same time, it is crucial for their motivation that employees find it possible –

ethically and professionally – to establish a relation to themselves as responsible and value-

generating for the community of practice when they take on the project framed by the management.

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[5] Honneth identifies 3 forms of recognition (Honneth 2006: 172-174) where I interpret the two mentioned here as particularly important to incremental innovation, strategy and change processes. The third recognition relation refers to love and friendship. In an organizational context it is all about liking each other no matter how often we come to doubt the other's cognitive and moral responsibility and contributions to the community of practice. There is something unconditional in the third kind of recognition relation that is more appropriate to close family relations than organizational life's discourse with the core task as the nodal point and requirements for the organization members' cognitive and moral responsibility and value-generating behavior in relation to the core task. That is why I am leaving that third recognition relation out of this paper.

The employee should feel that he or she can be - and indeed is – part in taking the organization to a better place. This could be by seeing that their effort in developing and testing solutions could increase sales, optimize production, create higher quality in case handling reduce waiting times for treatment or maintain the number of operations despite fewer staff resources.

What does it take for employees to engage in the management's projects?

In fair process, the manager's communicative acts are at the center of creating episodes and positionings that are conducive to the implementation of the strategy. Especially the manager's ability to define the context and facilitate constructive dialogues – that create an appropriate amount of new thoughts - becomes important for the individual autopoietic systems (the employees) to experience recognition, engage in the management's project and take up an agency position.

When the management sets clear expectations to employees through its specific facilitation, it is – in a social constructionist fair process perspective - defining a clear context for the employees; specifying the goals and framework for the task and the expected behavior: e.g. that employees engage in developing and testing solutions. The better the manager is at defining a clear context (for expectations to the employees), the easier it will be for them to act in relation to that context and thus construct themselves as someone recognizable.

If the manager has defined an unclear context, including unclear expectations to the employees, he or she will be more prone to seeing the employee as someone who is not recognizable (i.e. what he or she does is not generating value nor is it an expression of responsibility). But it is the management's very degree of clarity of the context that lays down the conditions for whether the employees can intentionally strive to live up to that context (goals, framework, expectations and

premises) that is the precondition for the employee's recognition. At the same time, the management's possibility of confirming the position as responsible and value-generating is conditioned by the employee's obligations to act. Not everything can be recognized in the organizational context. It is important to keep in mind that everyone acts logically according to their own context. It would be useful for the manager to initially examine the context in which the employee acts, and after that, together they can work out how it would make sense to continue in a way that would keep the organizational goals and frameworks in mind.

Thus, recognition is not a neutral process. With its position call, the management will try to construct employees in a certain form. Because not all kinds of behavior will be recognized by the individual manager as useful to solving the organizational challenges.

If the management is not transparent about what is going on, sets clear and specific expectations to employees and explains its considerations on selection and deselection of solutions for testing/implementing in relation to the purpose of the organization, it will be more difficult for employees to maintain an attitude towards the management as one who is reliable and value-generating to the community of practice. Thus, it is up to the manager to define a clear context that will become a condition for the ability to recognize and be recognized by employees: i.e. for establishing mutual relations of recognition.

Fair process in practice – from a social constructionist starting point

To carry out fair process, you must accept the social constructionist starting point: that we are constructed in the relation. In the context. If you create a process that has fair process qualities, you

will invite your employees into positions where they can knowingly strive to become responsible and value-generating in relation to the task you have given them. And they will be prone to accepting those invitations. I will demonstrate this using a case from an operation ward in a large hospital. If you, on the other hand, violate the principles of fair process, this will invite positions where employees take attitudes and actions that are undesirable to the solutions of the important challenges. For instance, they will show a lack of trust in the management's intentions and the quality of its decisions. They will find it more difficult to see what they can do themselves to handle the important challenges. They will more often come to think that it is the management that is making the wrong decisions or that the other department is handling the task in the wrong way, or that the politicians are making financial cutbacks in the wrong places. It is up to "the others" to solve the problems. The employees will drag their feet in implementing the solutions that the management has laid down and will not make a special effort to make things work well in practice. In other words, they will have a tendency to lose their foothold when in the agency position (the ability to see possibilities and act on them).

Do keep in mind that there are other things in the employees' social environment that will influence the positions they will take up, the attitudes they will adopt and the behavior they will display. In reality, the employees may disagree on ethical and professional levels to the purpose and contents of the changes. Fair process *predisposes* positions, attitudes and behaviors. Fair process does not determine them.

Case from an operation ward

I will demonstrate fair process in practice using a case from an operation ward in a large hospital. The case originates in an effect evaluation of a series of courses in fair process for managers in health services. The presentation is "told in three acts": the problematic first act, the exemplary second act and the culture changing third act.

Act one: The email about the function that was eliminated

The case starts on a Thursday where the charge nurse sends an important message via email to all employees. The message is that a function staffed with employees borrowed from another department will be shut down in two weeks, and that the employees are expected to take on the tasks of that function. The function that is to be shut down handles ordering and preparation of operating tools so that the professionals only need to focus on performing operations. The day after the email was sent out, the charge nurse goes on a 6-month educational leave.

During the following week, the employees feel increasingly dissatisfied and insecure. Several employees talk about the shut-down of the function as the first step in the management's "secret plan" to shut down other functions in the department. More people are talking about looking for work elsewhere to avoid being fired because they think that two weeks is an unreasonably short time span to reorganize work in a way that would allow them to continue to perform the same number of operations without compromising quality. The working environment representative (WER) of the ward listens to the many conversations that express dissatisfaction with the decision and the process as well as the feeling of job insecurity. After one week, the employees still have not prepared a plan for reorganizing tasks. The WER hears more and more people expressing distrust in management intentions and the quality of the specific decision and comes to the conclusion that the atmosphere will hardly change for the better. The WER is worried that the employees will seek employment elsewhere, which will make it even more difficult to handle the

ore tasks satisfactorily. The WER gets in touch with the department nurse and expresses her concerns with the situation.

Act two: The management suggests collaboration

The head nurse (second line manager) and the appointed interim charge nurse (first line manager) call a meeting with all employees to take place the next day. The two managers describe the background for the shutdown of the function including that this is the department's contribution to the total planned cutbacks for the entire hospital and that there will be no further cutbacks for the operation of the department. At the same time, they make it clear that there is no changing the shutdown and that the present number of operations is to be maintained. They say that to make this happen, they need the employees' knowledge of working procedures and ideas for how the tasks can be reorganized in practice. However, they also emphasize that they expect the employees to do their best to find a quick solution to the challenge. At the meeting, the employees have several ideas to how tasks can be reorganized, and the management helps them develop those ideas. They end up with a preliminary outline for solving the problem. At the same time, the employees ask for an additional week to incorporate the changes into practice. The management approves the time frame and makes it clear that they will ensure that the shutdown of the function will be postponed for one week while the employees test and improve the implementation plan. They also point out that after that time, the function will be shut down and the number of operations must remain at the previous level.

One week later, the employees present their experience with the new working procedures and their suggestions for improvement. After the two weeks have passed, the working procedures have been fully implemented and the number of operations lies at the agreed level.

Act three: The birth of an innovative collaborative culture

This event gives rise to a deeper and lasting change in the employees' positioning of themselves and the management. Twelve weeks after the episode, the management and employees say that the employees' attitudes and behavior regarding the management and the specific task have changed dramatically. No-one now believes that the old job function is necessary. Several people think that the working procedures are functioning even better than before. No-one is talking about looking for a new job anymore. The management and employees tell about how the episode created knowledge and hope that together the management and employees can succeed in solving difficult challenges. In fact, this experience became a point where the collaboration between the management and the employees branched out: now, every three weeks they have morning meetings together where they discuss what is going well, what needs improving and difficult upcoming challenges and how to solve them. The manager actively seeks out employee solution suggestions. Of course, the manager does not always choose to support or implement the employees' propositions, but she makes an effort to explain the rationale behind her decisions. The employees say that because of the manager´s explanations they gain increased knowledge of the organizational conditions, goals and framework which makes it easier for them to come up with solution suggestions that can be applied in practice. They also explain how their increased insight into the organizational conditions and management perspectives makes it easier for them to trust the management's intentions and the quality of its decisions.

The implicative force of the process[6]

The "old" charge nurse's "process" consists in a one-way-communication email. The context of the cutbacks is unclear, the rationale behind the decision why exactly this function was being shut down is deficient and the manager does not engage the employees in how the challenge can be solved. The manager expresses a clear expectation that the task will be solved but does not seek out employee suggestions for solutions. During the following days, the employees do not take an agency position (seeing possibilities and acting on them) in relation to solving the problem, but instead they express distrust in management intentions and the quality of the decision (a positioning of the manager as someone who cannot be trusted while positioning themselves as someone who cannot be trusted with solving the challenge).

Note that when the head nurse and the appointed interim charge nurse initiate an entirely different process strategy, the employees take an agency position almost simultaneously. The employees' behavior and their attitude to the management change dramatically. With the fair process strategy, the management created episodes that have an implicative force (Pearce 2004) on the relation between management and employees and the culture in the ward. This course of events illustrates the social constructionist point of fair process: We *are* not. We *become*. Fair process and violation of its principles predisposes the taking up of certain positions, attitudes and behaviors. The model below illustrates the course of events and the context shifts in the manager-employee relations and the department culture.

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[6] Implicative force is used by Barnett Pearce (Pearce 2004) as an expression of events creating a change in one or more involved persons' impression of the context. He distinguishes between different contextual levels: speech act (e.g. order, joke, request), episode, relation between the people involved, self/identity/life script and culture.

UNFAIR PROCESSS

FAIR PROCESS

Culture: No agency

Culture: Agency

Relation: Distrust, no relation of recognition and collaboration

Relation: Mutual trust, recognition and collaboration on developing solutions

| The old management sends out email about shutdown of function and educational leave | Employees see this as the first step in a round of layoffs | Employees do not take on the task of solving the problem. Several talk of looking for work elsewhere |

| The management meets with the employees and defines the context | The employees solve the problem | The management and employees meet every three weeks to discuss solving challenges in their core tasks |

Figure 3: The process shift towards fair process had an implicative force on the employee and management relations and the culture of the department

Towards a strategic process design for fair process

Kimberly Pearce (2010) distinguishes between three perspectives on management and design of processes of change: in-the-moment facilitation, meeting design and strategic process design (SPD). Competences in handling all three perspectives are important in making the principles and the theoretical concepts of fair process become practice in the change management process – a change management process that must solve important organizational challenges and create an innovative culture. Below, I will briefly describe the three perspectives.

In-the-moment facilitation

The manager's specific facilitation at a meeting can be referred to as "in-the-moment facilitation". In-the-moment facilitation calls for certain competences in the process level facilitator e.g. the abilities to define the context and handle question categories that may clarify the case matter, clarify actions, or that may be circular, reflexive, solution-focused etc., and generally he or she should be able to move on the meeting's process level where fair process is created (about in-the-moment facilitation cf. e.g. Hornstrup, 2005; Dahl and Juhl, 2009; Langslet, 2006*).*

Meeting design

A meeting consists in several in-the-moment facilitations that together form the process level of the meeting. How the process of a meeting should proceed to create fair process could be planned before the meeting takes place. This requires meeting design competences (cf. e.g. Bjerring and Lindén, 2008; Hornstrup, 2006 and 2007; Holman, 2007). The meeting design should be considered

according to the goals for the "greater" development process that the meeting episode is a part of. This in turn requires competences in strategic process design.

Strategic process design

In fair process, managers strive to define a clear strategic process design for the process of change. "Strategic" refers to striving for a clear goal for the process level of the change process (to create an innovative agency culture) and the content level (solving organizational challenges). "Process design" refers to striving for a clear connection between the planned episodes (the series of meeting designs) to make them collectively contribute to the process and content-related goals for the change process. The strategic process design perspective is not treated much in the systemic management literature.

A five-phase strategic process design for fair process

I have worked using fair process as the strategic process design for development processes in the health sector, municipal administrations and private production and service companies. I have trained managers in fair process who have now adopted an SPD-perspective. Many managers have been surprised at the level of speed and quality at which employees can suddenly develop, test and implement high quality solutions. When the process is handled tightly and clearly, the employees will usually have better conditions for concentrating on the contents. It becomes easier for them to deliver solutions that reflect their professional insight and that work in practice, thus contributing to solving the strategic challenges.

Below, I have listed the phases of a (cyclic) phase model for a strategic process design (SPD) for fair process. The phases are presented in chronological order. The individual phases may be filled by one or more meeting designs that are designed for the local context. The five phases will be completed in 2 to 8 weeks and after that they are repeated (as needed). The purpose of several, short cycles is to continually deliver solutions to the organizational challenges and create an innovative agency culture.

The five phases of the design:

1. Define the context for the innovation process
2. Engage employees in the development of solutions
3. Select solutions for testing in practice and explain your rationale behind selection and deselection.
4. Engage employees in testing the solutions in practice.
5. Select solutions for implementation and explain your rationale behind selection and deselection.

Phase 1: Define the context

The manager defines the context for the change and its background, purpose, framework and direction. In this phase, the management will also present the strategic process design for the change process to make the course of the process transparent, and it will clarify management

expectations to employees and what the employees can expect from management . Below is some inspiration for questions that it will usually be convenient for the management to be able to answer when defining the context:

- What is the situation?

- What is going to take place?

- What is the purpose?

- What effect should be created for whom and when?

- How does this align with the organization's other strategies?

- What is the framework– what is not negotiable, what do we need to discuss and know more about?

- What situation do we want/need to move away from? Where do we want to go?

- What should be possible afterwards that is not possible now?

- What (strategic) process design will get us there? What are my expectations to my employees in this connection?

- What is the time frame?

- What are the success criteria? (E.g. collaborating on developing, testing and implementing small, innovative solutions that add value to the organization. According to which criteria does the organization assess "value"?)

Phase 2: Engage employees in the development of solutions

The employees are engaged in developing solutions with a view to creating agency and solving the important challenges. The manager will continually define the context of the changes by asking questions to the connection between solution suggestions and the context of the changes. Furthermore, he or she will question the connections between the solution suggestions, how quickly they can be converted into practice and their expected value. The manager will facilitate in order to let the employees experience agency (see possibilities and act on them). The solution-focused approach, which has a very specific focus on what we want to achieve, the practical experience of the participants and small, action-oriented steps forward, is a useful facilitation method that makes agency possible (for an introduction to the solution-focused approach cf. e.g. Langslet, 2006; Dahl and Granhof Juh, 2009).

Phase 3: Select solutions for testing in practice and explain your rationale behind selection and deselection.

The manager explains his or her deliberations and criteria for selecting and deselecting solutions for testing in practice. Explaining means imparting knowledge of the creation process and the rationale behind decisions and why the input/ideas of individuals were selected or deselected in the final decision. By explaining, the manager shows that he or she has spent time reflecting on employee ideas in relation to the organization's challenges and the solutions' possibilities of implementation to create value for the organization. Thus, trusting the management becomes possible more often for employees even though their own ideas might have been rejected. At the same time, the context and the specific criteria for the manager's selection/deselection are clarified which enables employees to

produce future suggestions for solutions that fit into the context that the manager communicates via his explanation. Or it enables them to deliberately challenge the context with well-reasoned arguments.

Phase 4: Engage employees in testing the solutions in practice.

The manager gives the employee the opportunity and responsibility of testing the solutions in practice (creating agency). The manager will set up clear expectations to the employees to do their best to make the solutions work in practice and to their proposing ideas for efforts that may make the solutions work (or work even better). The employees are invited to share their reflections on the desirability of a solution in relation to the goals of the department/organization to generate qualified knowledge on options that are consistent with organizational goals. The manager will continually gather "practice stories": A) about the small steps forward that are made and what creates them, B) the problems that employees encounter along the way, how they may have solved them or what the management and employees can do to solve them together. Again, this is where the manager will maintain focus on creating agency. The solution-focused approach is a method well-suited for discussions on small steps forward that produce a feeling of agency.

Phase 5: Select solutions for implementation and explain your rationale behind selection and deselection.

Which solutions will become practice? The manager explains his or her deliberations and criteria for selecting and de-selecting solutions for implementation in practice, including how the solutions create value in specific working processes and in relation to realizing the organization's strategy.

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